

UNITED STATES DISTRICT AND BANKRUPTCY COURTS

FOR THE

MIDDLE DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

**HEALTH AND SAFETY
ORIENTATION MANUAL**

PREPARED BY

THE MIDDLE DISTRICT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

February 2000 RELEASE

*UNITED STATES DISTRICT AND BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA*

HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

I. INTRODUCTION

The United States Courts for the Middle District of Pennsylvania aspire to provide a safe, secure and healthy workplace for its employees and those we serve. In order for this to occur, it is important that you understand the mission of the court, the goals and functions of your office, and the precautions you can take to minimize your health risks. Our contact with the community can be challenging and sometimes adversarial. The working environment requires us to be in close contact with individuals whose lives may be in crisis for one reason or another, e.g., legal matters, financial issues, personal circumstances, etc. These individuals may displace their anger toward the court and its personnel. While every measure is and should be taken to provide a safe environment, this interaction is a reality for court employees.

A. The United States Courts have a number of functions:

1. District Court. The Clerk of Court is an officer of the court who files court papers, collects fees, issues process, and keeps records of court proceedings. The functions and duties of the Clerk of Court are usually specified by statute and court rules. See, e.g., 28 U.S.C. § 751; Fed.R.Civ. P. 77, 79.
2. Probation. The U.S. Probation Office provides pretrial services, presentence investigations and reports, and supervises offenders in the community. The functions and duties of U.S. Probation Officers are outlined in 18 U.S.C. § 3603.
3. Bankruptcy Court. The Clerk of the Bankruptcy Court, among other things, files documents, collects fees and keeps records and dockets of the Bankruptcy Court. The Bankruptcy Code, the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure and local practices and procedures specify the duties of the Bankruptcy Clerk.

B. The goals of this orientation manual and training programs are:

1. to assist you in recognizing inherent health and safety issues and to address them in a positive manner.
2. to provide you with direction on what to do when confronted with a health or safety issue or when injured on the job.
3. to create a safety conscious mind so that the occurrence of injury and illness is reduced and a safe and healthy work environment results, not only for us but for those we serve.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

Page 2 of 7

II. EMPLOYEE SAFETY AND ACCIDENT PREVENTION. As an employee of the U.S. Court, Middle District of Pennsylvania, you are expected to know and comply with all safety and accident prevention measures set forth in this manual.

A. Office Safety. The following are some precautions to take while working:

1. Keep all aisles, stairways and exits clear of obstructions. Do not block emergency exit routes.
2. Report uneven carpeting, tiles, unsafe wiring or electrical outlets to your supervisor or a management representative. Avoid overloading circuit or electrical outlets. Do not place electrical cords near heat or water or in regular travel paths. Tape down exposed wires.
3. Ensure heavy objects, which may be usable as weapons, are not within the reach of the public. Scissors and letter openers are to be stowed out of site. Do not provide visitors with access to weapons once they have gone through the magnetometer.
4. Keep doors and windows locked. Access is to be limited to responsible staff members. Do not allow visitors to walk through private areas unescorted and do not leave entryways unlocked if not under visual control.
5. Examine mail carefully before opening, e.g., prison mail. Letter bombs may have a greasy appearance or toxic smell. Surgical gloves are available for use to avoid direct contact with soiled or dirty mailings. Wash your hands after handling any mail.
6. Exercise care to safeguard personal items of value while at work. Never leave these items unattended or in the public view.
7. Observe behavior of visitors. Report unusual behavior, agitated or nervous behavior, to your supervisor or a management representative before allowing access to the work areas. Closely watch children who enter the work area or request that they be seated in a quiet, safe area.
8. Report any wet or slippery areas to your supervisor or a management representative.
9. Open file cabinets carefully. Avoid placing heavier items in the upper drawers to avoid top heavy cabinets.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

Page 3 of 7

A. Office Safety (continued):

10. Exercise caution when entering or exiting the building. Stay alert to hazardous areas and possible attack points. When working alone, make sure someone knows where you are and when you are expected to leave.
11. Report defective or broken equipment to your supervisor or a management representative. Do not use equipment which is malfunctioning or broken.
12. Know which offices are equipped with duress alarms for use in emergency situations.
13. Keep your personal work area neat, clean and unobstructed. Avoid placing hazardous items in desk drawers.
14. Clean your telephone on a regular basis, especially if shared with co-workers, for infection control purposes.

- B. Employee Injury or Occupational Disease.** All injuries sustained in the performance of duty, including diseases proximately caused by employment, are covered under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). FECA provides medical care and assistance, monetary compensation, and vocational rehabilitation to employees who sustain injuries, including occupational disease, as a result of their employment with the federal government.

As an employee, you are to follow the procedures of your office for filing a workers' compensation claim. Remember ... report all injuries that occur in the workplace promptly, no matter how minor, to your supervisor or a management representative. See Form CA-10 attached to this document for additional information on "What A Federal Employee Should Do When Injured At Work".

III. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.

- A. Fire and Emergency Evacuation.** The fire and evacuation procedures for the buildings are covered in the Government Service Agency's Occupant Emergency Plan (See Attached). As part of this training, review the Occupant Emergency Plan. Your supervisor will provide you with instructions on your duties under the plan.

1. In the event of a fire, use the following procedure - RACE:
 - a. R - Remove staff, visitors and guests in immediate danger.
 - A - Activate the fire alarm system by pulling one of the pull stations.
 - C - Close all windows and doors.
 - E - Extinguish the fire, if possible. Evacuate.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

Page 4 of 7

A. Fire and Emergency Evacuation *(continued)*.

- b. Stay calm, don't panic. Leave quickly. Do not use elevators to evacuate.
- c. Stay low to avoid smoke, heat and fumes. Feel doors for heat before opening to offices, hallways, or exits.
- d. Know the location of emergency equipment (fire alarms, fire extinguishers and fire hoses).
- e. Be familiar with the location of the nearest emergency exit of the building.

B. Bomb Threat. The GSA's Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) defines the procedures to follow for a bomb threat. Review this section thoroughly. Make a copy of the Telephone Bomb/Personal Threat Checklist which is attached to this manual and also located in the Addendum Section of the OEP and keep it next to your telephone.

1. Remember ... immediately notify your supervisor or a management representative in the event you receive a threatening telephone call or discover a suspicious object.
2. For bomb threats received by phone, keep the caller on the telephone as long as possible. Do not hang up the telephone after receiving the call. Trace the call using the trace button on your telephone, if available. Refer to the Bomb Threat Checklist for guidance in handling the call.
3. Suspicious objects discovered are to be assumed a bomb. Immediately report to your supervisor or a management representative the location of the object. Do not touch or move the object. Evacuate the area immediately.

C. Civil Disturbance. Although demonstrations outside federal buildings are not as frequent as they were during the late 1960's or early 1970's, they are still a concern. The Federal Protection Service is tasked with protecting federal buildings and employees. The following guidance is provided:

1. Follow the instructions given by the Federal Protective Service or local law enforcement. If instructions are not received, call your supervisor or a management representative.
2. Continue business unless otherwise instructed by the court, Federal Protective Service, or police.
3. Stay away from windows, when possible.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

Page 5 of 7

C. Civil Disturbance (*continued*):

4. Remain detached from the demonstrators. Do not show emotion concerning the issue of the demonstration.
5. Help fellow employees remain calm. Caution them against acts, gestures, statements, or utterances which might tend to indicate approval, disapproval, encouragement, or hostility toward the demonstrators.
6. Know the telephone numbers of the police or Federal Protective Service if demonstrators enter the building.
7. Secure outside doors if so instructed.
8. Avoid undertaking physical restraint or coercion of demonstrators unless authorized to do differently.
9. Refer media to police or Federal Protection Service personnel.

D. Violence Prevention. Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors or those we serve on the court's premises will not be tolerated.

An employee is responsible for notifying the supervisor or a management representative of any threats which have been witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received. Even without an actual threat, personnel are to report any behavior they have witnessed which they regard as threatening or violent, when that behavior is job related or might be carried out on the premises or is connected to employment. An employee is responsible for making this report regardless of the relationship between the individual and who initiated the threat or threatening behavior and the person or persons who were the focus of the threatening behavior.

E. Weather Emergency. In the event of a severe snow storm, heavy rains or unusual weather conditions creating hazardous travel during work hours, the highest ranking judicial officer in the building will decide if and when the office will close to permit personnel to leave. An employee is to consult with the supervisor regarding any other weather related procedures.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

Page 6 of 7

- IV. SECURITY.** The U.S. Marshal's Office provides court security and protection. All employees, visitors and guests are to adhere to its procedures.

All employees entering a courthouse are directed by the Court Security Officers (CSO's) to present identification and/or process through the court security system. This involves screening by the magnetometer, which includes but is not limited to inspection of all personal property brought onto the premises, such as packages, briefcases, purses, etc.

- A. Employee Identification.** A photo identification is provided to each newly appointed employee upon their entrance on duty. This identification is to be in one's possession while on duty. In the event your name changes or the identification card is lost, misplaced or stolen, please contact your Personnel Representative to receive a replacement. Your ID is for your use only and is never to be shared with another person for any reason.
- B. Access to the Building.** Entry into the federal buildings in the Middle District after normal business hours is not authorized except to conduct official business. To the extent possible, court security officers or General Services guards should be notified.
- C. Visitors.** Visitors are restricted to the public areas of the court unless otherwise authorized by a management representative.
- D. Court Property.** The records, documents, and equipment are property of the Court and are not to be taken from the court's premises without proper authorization.

Security is part of everyone's responsibility, for it is only when the individual components are secure that total security can be achieved.

- V. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH.** The Court strives to provide a healthy and productive work force, free from recognized health hazards.

- A. Drug-free Workplace.** It is the policy of the Court that employees be free from the illegal use, possession and distribution of controlled substances (as defined in the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. §§ 811-812).
- B. Smoke-Free Work Environment.** The Court is committed to providing a smoke-free work environment for its employees and those we serve. Smoking is prohibited in all federal buildings, except in designated areas approved by the agency head.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

Page 7 of 7

V. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH (continued).

- C. First Aid/Medical Emergency.** First aid supplies are available in the Clerk's Office and other locations throughout the courthouse. Employees should familiarize themselves with those locations. To call an ambulance for emergency medical care, dial "911." Provide the location of the emergency, including building and floor, and condition of individual. Advise a management representative of the situation.
- D. Infection Control.** All necessary precautions are taken within the Court to prevent the transmission of infectious materials that may be contacted by employees. Where necessary, the court will provide the necessary personal protective equipment, e.g., surgical gloves, to ensure the well being of the employee and avoidance of work-related hazards.
- E. Employee Assistance Program.** The Federal Occupational Health Services Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides confidential, professional assistance to employees who are experiencing personal problems, e.g. chemical dependency, emotional disturbances, personal issues, etc., that may affect their well being and job performance. The EAP is available to employees and their immediate family members. Family members are limited to services which directly relate to the employee's well being and employment. The EAP can be accessed twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week, by calling (800) 222-0364 and identifying yourself as a Court employee.

- VI. SAFETY COMMITTEE.** The mission of the Safety Committee is to promote a safe and healthy work environment for employees and those we serve. If you happen to discover a health or safety issue, please feel free to contact Gary Hollinger, the Safety Coordinator, or any member of the Safety Committee. A list of members of the Health and Safety Committee will be posted by each participating agency.

*United States District and Bankruptcy Court
for the
Middle District of Pennsylvania*

HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

<input type="checkbox"/> Office Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Violence Prevention
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Injury/Accident	<input type="checkbox"/> Weather Emergency
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire and Emergency Evacuation	<input type="checkbox"/> Security Procedures
<input type="checkbox"/> Bomb Threat	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Health
<input type="checkbox"/> Civil Disturbance	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety Committee

I certify that the above information has been reviewed and explained to me and I agree to comply with the health, safety and security procedures as set forth by the United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Employee Signature

Date

ATTACHMENTS

Telephone Bomb Threat / Personal Threat Checklist

If you receive a bomb threat or personal threat by telephone, please note the following and immediately notify GSA Federal Protective Service (215) 597-0000, the U.S. Marshals Service (570) 323-7245 and the Occupant Emergency Coordinator at (717) 221-4457.

Name of Person Receiving Call: _____

Date: _____

Time Received: _____

Time Ended: _____

Exact Words of the Caller: _____

The call: Is it local _____ Long Distance _____ Unknown _____

Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Age: <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/> Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Elderly	Tone: <input type="checkbox"/> Loud <input type="checkbox"/> Soft	Pitch: <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low
Voice Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Raspy <input type="checkbox"/> Nasal <input type="checkbox"/> None	Speech: <input type="checkbox"/> Fast <input type="checkbox"/> Slow <input type="checkbox"/> Distinct <input type="checkbox"/> Distorted <input type="checkbox"/> Stutter	Language: <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Cursing	Accent: <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> Negro <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Oriental <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Manner: <input type="checkbox"/> Calm <input type="checkbox"/> Angry <input type="checkbox"/> Coherent <input type="checkbox"/> Incoherent <input type="checkbox"/> Intoxicated		Background Noises: <input type="checkbox"/> Voices <input type="checkbox"/> Street Traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Music <input type="checkbox"/> Trains <input type="checkbox"/> Animals <input type="checkbox"/> Quiet	
<input type="checkbox"/> Emotional <input type="checkbox"/> Rational <input type="checkbox"/> Irrational <input type="checkbox"/> Deliberate <input type="checkbox"/> Laughing		<input type="checkbox"/> Bedlam <input type="checkbox"/> Airplanes <input type="checkbox"/> Factory Mach. <input type="checkbox"/> Office Mach. <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Points to Remember: Keep caller talking; don't interrupt!!! Ask him or her to speak louder and/or slower if necessary. Ask him or her to repeat to ensure you understand.

When an opportunity arises, ask questions like:

Bomb Threat:

- When is the bomb going to explode?
- Where is the bomb? What does it look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- Why did you place the bomb?

Personal Threat:

- What is your name?
- What is your address?
- Where are you calling from?
- Why do you want to (whatever threat)?

When this form is completed, immediately notify your supervisor and department head!!



What A Federal Employee Should Do When Injured At Work

Report to Supervisor

Every job-related injury should be reported as soon as possible to your supervisor. Injury also means any illness or disease that is caused or aggravated by the employment as well as damage to medical braces, artificial limbs and other prosthetic devices.

Obtain Medical Care

Before you obtain medical treatment, ask your supervisor to authorize medical treatment by use of form CA-16. You may initially select the physician to provide necessary treatment. This may be a private physician or, if available, a local Federal medical officer/hospital. Emergency medical treatment may be obtained without prior authorization. Take the form CA-16 and form OWCP-1500/HCFA-1500 to the provider you select. The form OWCP-1500/HCFA 1500 is the billing form physicians must use to submit bills to OWCP. Hospitals and pharmacies may use their own billing forms. On occupational disease claims form CA-16 may not be issued without prior approval from OWCP.

File Written Notice

In traumatic injuries, complete the employee's portion of Form CA-1. Obtain the form from your employing agency, complete and turn it in to your supervisor as soon as possible, but not later than 30 days following the injury. For occupational disease, use form CA-2 instead of form CA-1. For more detailed information carefully read the "Benefits ..." and "Instructions ..." sheets which are attached to the Forms CA-1 and CA-2.

Obtain Receipt of Notice

A "Receipt" of Notice of Injury is attached to each Form CA-1 and Form CA-2. Your supervisor should complete the receipt and return it to you for your personal records. If it is not returned to you, ask your supervisor for it.

Submit Claim For COP/Leave and/or Compensation For Wage Loss

If disabled due to traumatic injury, you may claim continuation of pay (COP) not to exceed 45 calendar days or use leave. A claim for COP must be submitted no later than 30 days following the injury (the form CA-1 is designed to serve as a claim for continuation of pay). If disabled and claiming COP, submit to your employing agency within 10 work days medical evidence that you sustained a disabling traumatic injury. If disabled beyond the COP period, or if you are not entitled to COP, you may claim compensation on form CA-7 or use leave. If disabled due to occupational disease, you may claim compensation on form CA-7 or use leave. A claim for compensation for disability should be submitted as soon as possible after it is apparent that you are disabled and will enter a leave-without-pay status.

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). Benefits include continuation of pay for traumatic injuries, compensation for wage loss, medical care and other assistance for job-related injury or death. For additional information about the FECA, read pamphlet CA-11, "When Injured at Work" or Federal Personnel Manual, Chapter 810, Injury Compensation, available from your employing agency. The agency will also give you the address of the OWCP Office which services your area.

Post on Employees' Bulletin Board

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment Standards Administration
Office of Workers' Compensation Programs

